United Nations

Daily Highlights

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MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ After two days of debate on situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Security Council expected to take action on tightening of mandatory sanctions on Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); would ask Secretary-General to look into possibility of deploying observers on borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina to monitor implementation of sanctions.

+ United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa expresses dismay at revelations concerning activities of military intelligence; reiterates support for Goldstone Commission's investigation of violence in that country.

+ Secretary-General sends message of hope and reassurance to Somali people saying mandate of the United Nations Operation in Somalia "remains unchanged".

+ International community is looking to United Nations in new and ever more complex ways, particularly with regard to conflict resolution, peace-keeping and peacemaking endeavours, Eugeniusz Wyzner, Under-Secretary-General for Public Information, tells Special Political Committee.

+ Last week's cease-fire in Sarajevo marred by isolated incidents that endanger whole cease-fire agreement, Spokesman for Co-Chairmen of Yugoslav Conference says.

+ President of Georgia says no concrete steps have been taken to solve conflict in his country; confrontation is "intensifying and number of casualties grows daily".

+ Secretary-General tells Security Council President of agreement on adjusted implementation of peace accords in El Salvador; calls on all parties to act with particular caution during upcoming "especially delicate phase".

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For information media—not an official record

+ United Nations owed some $576 million by Member States in total outstanding contributions to regular budget, as of 31 October 1992.

+ Recent update from United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia says 14 political parties have provisionally registered for upcoming elections next spring.

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After two days of consideration of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Security Council, was expected to take action on the tightening of its mandatory sanctions on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) under resolution 713 (1991) and 757 (1992). The Council was to take action on the draft resolution after having heard statements by a large number of speakers during meetings today and last Friday, 13 November.

Deeply concerned about reports of continuing violations of its sanctions, the Council would decide to prohibit transshipment through the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia of crude oil, petroleum products, coal, energy-related equipment, iron, steel, other metals, chemicals, rubber tyres, vehicles, aircraft and motors of all types, unless such transshipment is specifically authorized on a case-by-case basis. It would further decide that "any vessel in which a majority or controlling interest is held by a person or undertaking in or operating from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia" should be considered a vessel of the Federal Republic of Yogoslavia, "regardless of the flag under which it sails". The Council would also call upon States "to halt all inward or outward maritime shipping in order to inspect and verify their cargoes and destinations", and it would reaffirm the responsibility of riparian States to ensure that shipping on the Danube is in accordance with its resolutions.

Under today's resolution, the Council would ask the Secretary-General to present to it, as soon as possible, his recommendations concerning the deployment of observers on the borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina to facilitate the implementation of the above prohibitions.

With regard to the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the region, the Council would invite the Secretary-General, in consultations with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other humanitarian agencies, to study the possibility of the promotion of safe areas for humanitarian purposes.

Also under today's decision, the Council would call upon the parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina to consider the draft outline constitution as a basis for negotiating a political settlement of the conflict and to continue negotiations for constitutional arrangements on the basis of the draft outline, under the auspices of the Co-Chairmen of the Steering Committee. It would reaffirm that any practice of 'ethnic cleansing' was "unlawful and unacceptable" and would not be permitted to affect the outcome of the negotiations on constitutional arrangements for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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The Council would condemne the refusal of all parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina, "in particular the Bosnian Serb paramilitary forces" to comply with its previous resolutions and demanded that they and all other concerned parties fulfil their obligations under those resolutions. It also would demand that all forms of interference from outside Bosnia and Herzegovina, including infiltration into the country of irregular units and personnel "cease immediately".

By the resolution, the parties in Bosnia and Herzegovina would be called upon to fulfil their commitments to put into effect an immediate cessation of hostilities and to negotiate in the Mixed Military Working Group to end the blockades of Sarajevo and other towns and to demilitarize them under international supervision.

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The United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa (UNOMSA) has expressed its "shock and dismay" at the revelations made today by Justice Goldstone, head of the Commission of Inquiry Regarding the Prevention of Public Violence and Intimidation, about activities of the South African military intelligence.

It conveyed its full support for Justice Goldstone and his Commission, and backed his appeal to be granted the authority to urgently investigate the operations of such agencies as the army and police, Umkhonto we Sizwe (the armed wing of the African National Congress), the Azania People's Liberation Army, the KwaZulu police and certain private "security firms".

The UNOMSA, established by the Security Council in August, was authorized to address areas of concern relevant to the question of violence, and to strengthen and enhance the capacity of indigenous mechanisms seeking to end public violence and intimidation. The Goldstone Commission, one of the primary structures established by the National Peace Accord, is charged with exposing the background and causes of the violence.

The UNOMSA called on the South African authorities to take immediate and effective measures to enable to Commission to carry out its work and expressed itself ready to give any assistance the Commission might need.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has sent a message of hope and reassurance to the Somali people saying the mandate of the United Nations Operation in Somalia "remains unchanged". However, the mandate could be translated into reality "only on the basis of understanding and mutual support between the United Nations and the Somali people".

The mandate put forward by the Security Council, the Secretary-General said, was to save lives, defeat the sceptres of famine and civil strife, and

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pave the way to political reconciliation. The United Nations was currently making an intensive effort to secure the consent of the Somali authorities concerned for the deployment of the United Nations security force, he said.

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At the new dawn of the post-Cold War era, the international community was looking to the United Nations in new and ever more complex ways, particularly with regard to conflict resolution, peace-keeping and peacemaking endeavours, Eugeniusz Wyzner, Under-Secretary-General for Public Information, told the Special Political Committee this morning, as it began consideration of questions relating to information.

The Department of Public Information (DPI), he continued, had confronted these challenges with a renewed sense of vigour, even enthusiasm. He stressed that DPI had been expanding the scope of its support to the Secretary-General in his interaction with the press, while undertaking a multi-media approach -- print, radio and television -- to promote and disseminate the goals and activities of the Organization.

As a prime example of DPI's public information campaigns for major events, the Under-Secretary-General cited the Department's efforts to promote and prepare the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992, which yielded an "unparallel interest in and request for information about both the subject and the event itself."

The Under-Secretary-General also underscored the necessity of achieving equal working facilities and methods for the coverage of meetings in English and French, announcing that steps would be taken shortly to provide real parity in that area Secretariat-wide.

Referring to DPI's efforts to actively pursue the integration of certain information centres with UNDP field offices, Mr. Wyzner stated that the objective of the exercise was to strengthen the unified image of the United Nations system in the field, "without prejudice to the functional autonomy of the information component in the field office, and to enhance efficiency through the achievement of economies of scale". About a third of the UNIC's had already been integrated, he said, emphasizing that the experience gained over the initial one-year period would be studied and shared with other field offices which could benefit from closer coordination.

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Last week's cease-fire in Sarajevo, signed by the military commanders of the three parties to the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina, had been marred by isolated incidents that endangered the whole cease-fire agreement, the Spokesman for the Co-Chairmen of the International Conference on Former Yugoslavia said today.

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Briefing correspondents today in Geneva, Spokeman Fred Eckhard, said the situation in Sarajevo had improved considerably, permitting the evacuation of hundreds of people in recent days. He said agreement had also been reached on the opening of an additional corridor through the city for humanitarian supplies.

Military observers of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) were now deployed at the airfield in north-west Bosnia, a move which the spokesman described as significant, because there had been evidence of possible violations of the Security Council's "no-fly" zone in that area, as well as other parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The spokesman pointed out that initial data had been gathered by UNPROFOR, indicating that a number of unauthorized flights over Bosnia and Herzegovina had taken place. He said the military significance of those flights could not be satisfactorily determined without the technical data being supported by observations on the ground.

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Eduard Shevardnadze, President of Georgia, has informed the Secretary-General that so far no concrete steps have been taken to solve the conflict in his country, and that in fact the confrontation is "intensifying and the number of casualties grows daily".

In a letter to the Secretary-General, dated 11 November, Mr. Shevardnadze further said that his predictions regarding the possible broadening of the conflict zone in the Caucasus was coming true. Hostilities between North Ossetia and the Ingush had already begun, with no existing mechanisms in the region to settle the conflict. Should another Caucasus War occur, he said, it would "spell catastrophe not only for the Caucasus".

It was apparent, the letter said, that the Georgian side had strictly followed the principles and fulfilled the obligations outlined in the 3 September Agreement, "while the other sides have violated them constantly". Mr. Shevardnadze urged the Secretary-General to consider "new practical steps" in order to solve the conflict in Georgia.

A United Nations fact-finding mission visited Georgia from 13 to 16 October. Two of the members of that mission remain in Georgia to work for a peaceful settlement of the conflict.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in a letter to the President of the Security Council, reports that progress has been made in implementing the adjusted timetable of the peace process in El Salvador. He writes that President Alfredo Cristiani has agreed to complete the implementation of the recommendations of the Ad-Hoc Commission on purification of the Armed Forces within a specified timeframe, allowing for the formal end of the armed conflict on 15 December.

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A certain adjustment was necessary for practical reasons regarding military personnel administration, he writes, and President Cristiani has agreed to inform him by 29 November of the decisions he has taken on the matter. Assuming that these decisions match those of the Ad-Hoc Commission, the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN) is to provide the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL) with a final inventory of its weapons and begin their destruction on 1 December.

"Contingent upon my confirmation that these actions have been duly completed, the Government would promptly resume the dissolution of military units as previously agreed", he writes.

The Secretary-General, on 23 October, proposed to the Government and the FMLN a set of adjustments to the timetable of the Peace Agreements according to which the cessation of the armed conflict would be completed on 15 December. He sent Under-Secretary-General Marrack Goulding and Assistant Secretary-General Alvaro de Soto to discuss the proposal with the parties to the conflict. The FMLN accepted the proposal contingent upon agreement by the Government, but President Cristiani had reservations about the envisaged schedule.

Mr. Boutros-Ghali writes that with the peace process entering an especially delicate phase, it will be imperative that both parties act with caution and restraint, both until 15 December and for an extended period after that, "so that national reconciliation may become a reality".

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The United Nations is currently owed some $576 million by Member States in total outstanding contributions to the regular budget, as of 31 October 1992, according to a new report dated 3 November. The United States and the Russian Federation -- the two major debtors to the budget -- owe some $295 million and $120 million, respectively.

The report on the status of contributions is published in accordance with a decision taken by the General Assembly in 1975 that the Secretary-General provide Member States, on a biannual basis, with information, for each Member State, on the amounts assessed, paid and owed to the regular budget and on continuing operations for which there is a special assessment.

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According to a recent update from the Spokesman of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), the most recent political party to register for the upcoming elections next spring is called the 'Liberal Reconciliation Party' -- the fourteenth political party to register provisionally for the Cambodian elections.

According to the press release, 20,315 international personnel are currently attached to UNTAC, the bulk of whom are members of the peace-keeping force. There are 15,738 men and women serving in the Military Component. The

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strength of the Civilian Police Component is 3,224. International staff attached to UNTAC's five other components, various divisions and administration number 927. There are 426 United Nations volunteers.

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